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BOOKS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Voyage aux États-Unis de l'Amérique, 1793-1798. By MOREAU DE SAINT-MÉRY. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by STEWART L. MIMS, Assistant Professor of History, Yale University. [Yale Historical Publications, Manuscripts and Edited Texts, published under the Direction of the Department of History, no. II.] (New Haven: Yale University Press. 1913. Pp. xxxvi, 440.)

MOREAU DE SAINT MÉRY (1750-1819), the well-known historian of the French Antilles, lived in the United States as an exile from 1794 to 1798. His *Voyage*, of which only short extracts have previously been published, was compiled by him about the year 1815. It is a book of travels in the making—a hodge-podge of extracts from Moreau's diary (the original of which has disappeared), of letters sent and received, of observations recorded after his return to France, and of facts gathered from American newspapers and other travellers. The result is literary chaos, but a work of greater value to the historical student than the usual glib traveller's tale, for the wheat can sometimes be separated from the chaff. Moreau, had he lived, would probably have rewritten the whole manuscript for publication; Professor Mims has wisely refrained from attempting to do so for him.

After a rough voyage of 119 days, Moreau landed at Norfolk, remained there two months, and then proceeded to New York *via* Baltimore and Philadelphia. His powers of observation make the account of these short travels, which fill half the book, decidedly worth while. At Princeton, for instance, where he stopped a few hours, he describes minutely the architecture and interior arrangements of Nassau Hall, pokes fun at Rembrandt Peale's portrait of Washington at the Battle of Princeton, and notes the price of students' board and washing.

In October, 1794, Moreau settled down in Philadelphia, to conduct a French press and book-shop. The latter and most valuable half of the *Voyage* is devoted to his residence there. This part of the book is a source of the first importance for American society at the end of the eighteenth century. Other travellers of the period—Liancourt, Weld, Brissot, Michaux, Volney—have described regions where Moreau never penetrated, and have left impressions of American life as a whole. Some of them mixed in the "Republican Court", to which Moreau was not admitted—he was refused a ticket to the "birthnight ball" on the ground of being a shopkeeper. But Moreau alone has recorded the life of the solid Philadelphia bourgeoisie, with which he associated for three years. His love for detail, and his somewhat salacious curiosity have led him to make interesting observations on intimate subjects that are usually passed over by contemporary writers, and considered beneath their dignity by historians. He comments on the habits of American women

with brutal frankness; he gives the price of every imaginable commodity and service, from peaches (five a penny) to an *accouchement* (\$12.50). The book must be used with caution, however; Moreau's credulousness being shown by such statements as "Les chiens des Etats unis sont sujets aux maladies syphillitiques" (p. 353).

Moreau's shop was a meeting-place for the émigrés in Philadelphia, and his *Voyage* is a valuable source for their life in America. It has already been drawn upon by French writers for this purpose. There are some interesting side-lights on Talleyrand, with whom Moreau was on terms of close intimacy, and a number of unpublished letters from him after his return to France. Moreau himself returned to France shortly after the passage of the Alien Act, and the book ends with an amusing account of place-hunting in Paris.

Since there are no acknowledged canons in this country for editing texts, any criticism of the rules Professor Mims has adopted would be beside the mark. Suffice it to say, that he has followed his own standards consistently. He has added an excellent biographical sketch of Moreau, but his notes and index are meagre. However, he has amply fulfilled his "primary aim" of making this interesting manuscript "available as a historical document" (p. vi).

S. E. MORISON.

American State Trials: a Collection of the Important and Interesting Criminal Trials which have taken place in the United States, from the Beginning of our Government to the Present Day. By JOHN D. LAWSON, LL.D. Volume I. (St. Louis: F. H. Thomas Law Book Company. 1914. Pp. xxxvi, 857.)

THE series of which this book is the beginning will be welcomed by all scholars. There are few writings more interesting than the reports of testimony and speeches at trials. There are none of more value to students of history, not only the history of politics, but constitutional history, the history of manners, and even the history of language. In the United States more than elsewhere are they needed; for many trials in the state courts, especially in cases of impeachment and those arising from the claims of powers by executives and by separate legislative houses, contain precedents of great value for national crises that may hereafter arise. There are none more hard to find. Originally published in pamphlets and newspapers, most copies of them are soon destroyed. Few libraries, public or private, contain collections, and no bookseller in the world, so far as careful inquiry can ascertain, makes a specialty of dealing in them.

The chief merit of the book sent us for review is that the testimony and arguments are printed in full, without that condensation or rhetorical embellishment which we ordinarily find in such reports. The editor is well qualified for his task. The long list of appointments to